

Community-Based Marketing of Wind Energy

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The Land and Water Fund of the Rockies

- Non-profit environmental organization (programs in energy, water, lands)
- Energy Project - started in 1991
- Mission - to make it feasible for utilities and others to invest in clean energy; policies and market development
- 6 state region – CO, NM, AZ, NV, UT, WY

Unique Partnership

Electricity Provider & Non-profit

- Extensive market **education** needed
- Grassroots organizing techniques to reach and educate a **broader set of potential customers** in all community sectors
- Environmental group involvement lends **credibility** to the product and marketing
- Generates significant **free media**
- **Lower marketing costs** for electricity providers, especially if pass-through costs

Green Power Program Design

- **Voluntary program** for consumers willing to pay more to bring wind power online sooner
- Incremental block (100kWh, ~20% avg usage)
- **Reasonable cost** (extra \$2.50/month)
- Consumers get what they pay for (PUC regulated, Accreditation standard)
- Benefits – fuel cost adjustment exemption (**stable electricity prices for wind customers**)
- Ponnequin Technical Advisory Committee – environmental impacts, avian issues

20 Colorado Electricity Suppliers Offer Green Power Programs

- **Xcel Windsource:** 17,000 residential, 400+ businesses
- **Platte River Power Authority:** Fort Collins, Loveland, Estes Park, Longmont
- **Municipal:** Colorado Springs, Aspen
- **Tri-State Coops:** 14 – Yampa Valley, Gunnison Cty, San Luis Valley

How it Works:

A Grassroots Campaign

- A community-based campaign organized and managed by local environmental group, in coordination with electricity provider
- Secondary partnerships with government, business, other non-profits (OEMC grant to work across the state – Gunnison County, Yampa Valley)
- Public policy and private actions that produce market pull for green power
- **Goal: community-wide involvement in promotion and purchase of green power**

Grassroots Campaign Activities

- **Grassroots activities:** information tables/presentations at community events, articles in newsletters and municipal bill stuffers, “street teams” in high density business areas
- **Marketing:** brochure, posters and stickers for customers signing up, web site sign ups (Kinko’s), media coverage
- **Added value:** unique gateways into community, set purchase in broad context (compelling story), can sell as an ethic like recycling – “it’s the right thing to do”

Grassroots Campaign
for Wind Power



Business Community Leadership

- Early **Champions**: IBM, Coors, Rocky Mtn. Steel, Denver and Boulder
- Small businesses, community-building (like sponsoring Little League teams)
- Employee campaigns, incentives
- Denver's Channel 9 News – “wind cam”
- Peers speak to peers - New Belgium Brewery, Kinko's, Aspen Ski Co., Boulder Comm. Hospital
- **1 in 6 businesses willing to pay 2.5 cents/kWh premium for, on average, 15% of energy**

This Business is Powered by Colorado Wind Energy



Photo courtesy of NREL



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CORE
Common Ownership Resource Enterprise

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ONE WORLD
Arts

Public Sector Leadership

- **State level:** Governor's Mansion, state energy office, CDPHE SEP program
- **Municipalities:** press conference, green power as community ethic like recycling - former mayor letter to peers
- **University of Colorado:** student vote
- **Federal level:** EPA and NREL - DOE
10 MW federal aggregation

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Success!

- **1997** - no one knew if households and businesses would pay more, 0 MW wind online
- **2002** – statewide - 20,000 residential customers, 500 businesses, **60+ MW wind online now** (Ponnequin, Peetz = 1% of Colorado's mix)
- **20 utilities** in Colorado offer green power
- **Diverse participation** – range of geographic, ideological and socio-economic settings
- **Mainstreaming green power** - 1/3 in U.S. can choose; 225 MW installed, 115+ MW planned for green pricing programs